

THE
MONTHLY OFFERING.

DECEMBER, 1840.

For the Monthly Offering.

JAMES MAJOR MONROE—A Fugitive Slave.

BY HIRAM WILSON.

Concluded from page 56

Deep solicitude sat upon the brow of the poor captive. We had every physical comfort that heart could wish. The happy circle around the Autumnal fire-side assuaged the sorrows, and in some degree, dispelled the gloom that darkened the prospect of the care-worn pilgrim to the American Canaan. The frightful howling of the winds, the rapid falling of the leaves, and the constant roar of the waves, dashing upon the southern shores of the lake, most effectually impressed my mind with the decay of nature beneath the warring elements, and at the same time fitly corresponded with the tempestuous heavings of his troubled breast. We waited with painful anxiety till the going down of the sun, when the wind abated, a calm ensued, and we were called to the departing steamer. We proceeded on our way, thankful to God for our protection, and soon found ourselves at Detroit. A narrow strait only, separated the pilgrim from the "promised land." He was soon at the east end of what we sometimes call Freedom's Ferry, where the deep gloom of a worse than Egyptian night departed, and gave place to the bright sun of British liberty, which now beamed upon him. He readily found employment in a respectable family, where he not only received liberal wages, but soon gained the confidence and approba-

tion of his employer. When he first entered the Province I lost sight of him and he of me for about three weeks.

When we met again, I found him remarkably grateful for his deliverance. Seldom have I ever seen a person apparently more thankful for the protection of Heaven and the benefactions of men. He remained but a short time on the Canada side till he found he could command much higher wages at a public house in Detroit, Michigan. Accordingly he spent several months in that city, during which time he periled his liberty for the purpose of accumulating property and furnishing himself with the means of getting his wife out of bondage. For industry, integrity, and fidelity to his engagements, he soon established a good reputation and was much respected by all who knew him. During the winter of 1837, he discovered that southern hyenas were prowling about in Detroit and spreading a snare for him. To avoid them he skipped across upon the ice to the Canada shore, in extremely perilous circumstances—the river having but just frozen over, and no other person yet daring to cross. In the course of a few days when all was again quiet, he returned to the city and resumed his services, and continued to labor unmolested till some time in the spring, when some vile miscreant in the capacity of a man-thief entered his sleeping apartment in the dead of the night, for the purpose of capturing and returning him again to slavery. A sharp conflict ensued, in which the invader was wounded with a large carving knife and immediately repulsed.

Traces of blood were noticed in the yard the next morning, but who the assailant was, or whither he went, was not known. Fortunately for James, and perhaps more so for himself he showed his face there no more.

In mid-summer of the same year, I visited Detroit, and found him in trouble and deep anxiety about his wife, she was still south of the Ohio river in the cruel fangs of slavery, and he was determined if possible to rescue her. He showed me a thrilling letter he had but just received from her, which wrought upon his sympathies and strengthened his noble but desperate purpose. He seemed to think that

time, that no other being on earth but the wife of his youth could ever have his affections—he was ready therefore to jeopardize his liberty and his life on her behalf. Several persons tried to discourage him, and told him he was a fool for going, but to no purpose—his heart was fixed—his mind was unwavering. He gathered together a sufficient amount of money to defray his expenses—unbosomed to me his cares and submitted to my judgment his plan which was well contrived for accomplishing his object. The most I feared was, that his strong affection for his companion, would induce him to go too far in periling his own liberty. As I was then coming down the lake from Detroit to Buffalo, he took a passage with me to Cleaveland in the same boat. We reached Cleaveland about midnight. I conducted the poor fellow up into the city to the house of a friend, whom I knew would not be offended if called up at that hour. I introduced the pilgrim stranger to my friend who kindly received him. I stated briefly his delicate circumstances—gave him a few lines of introduction to friends on his way, prayerfully commended him to God and returned in haste to the boat, lest I should be left. I heard nothing more of him for many weeks. When we met again, he narrated to me his adventures. Unfortunately he failed of accomplishing his object and was under the necessity of flying back to the North in sad loneliness, grieved and disappointed. He saw his old master LaTule, but was not discovered by him. How must his aching heart have throbbed and his grief-worn frame have quivered at the sight of the bloody tyrant! For I had often noticed broad scars of a finger length about the face and neck of James, which he said LaTule had caused in freaks of passion with a butcher's knife. His master was a butcher by trade, and evidently a cruel, bloody man. James saw his wife and had a brief interview with her on the trembling theme of elopement. She engaged to meet him at a certain time and place, when he was to bring her away, but for some cause or other, she failed of coming at the time proposed. He waited beyond the time, and finally despairing of her coming, he left the place, well nigh overcome with anguish.

Several slaves had but recently escaped from that neighborhood, in consequence of which a rigid system of vigilance was kept up, and his noble purposes were thwarted. On his return to the North, he was twice interrupted and taken. Once he liberated himself by violence, and once he was brought before a strangely fanatical magistrate, who interrogated the captor thus; "Why have you brought this man before me?" Ans. "Because I thought him to be a runaway!" You thought him to be a runaway! (indignantly) "*You thought him to be a runaway!*" said the magistrate, "and what right had you to stop this man on his journey? Suppose you were travelling among strangers, and some person should stop you and bring you before a magistrate, simply because he thought you to be a thief, when there was no shadow of proof against you, how would you regard such treatment?" The case was instantly non-suited. Said the magistrate to the poor captive, "You see the high way out there." Yes. "*Very well, just go out and take which end you please, and go where you please.*" I have frequently seen the subject of this narrative since that time, and am sorry to end the story by saying, that he is married to another woman. We may not wonder at this. I know a man in this Province, who is now living with his fifth wife, and for aught he knows the four first are all living, but were violently sundered from him at the South. In the first instance, he was working at a mill when news came to his ear that his wife was sold and driven off. He took a large stone, lashed a grape vine round it, went upon the mill-dam, fixed a noose for his neck and was about to plunge to the bottom of the deep water below, but the thought occurred that it would be the ruin of his soul for eternity. So he rolled off the stone, which went quick to the bottom. He sat and gazed upon the spot while the bubbles rose to the top and broke—awful thoughts revolved within his breast for a few moments, when he rose and left the place.

"Fleecy locks and dark complexion,
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;
Skins may differ, but affection
Dwells in black and whites the same."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE OFFERING.

The following letter to Professor Hodges, Princeton, New Jersey, induced by an article in the Liberator of May 17th, headed "Slavery in the Churches" was sent more than a year since. No reply has been received. It is at your service for the Offering.

H. S.

Boston, June 14th, 1839.

Sir,—In a late Southern Christian Sentinel, an article written by you and published in the Biblical Repository, is quoted with great approbation; an extract from this article has alone met my view; from that I learn you seek to maintain the position that Slavery is not forbidden in the Bible. Your arguments have proved a healing unction to the sore mind of the slaveholder.

I have reflected very deeply on your position advanced at this time, when an effort is now making by a band of religious people to impress the slaveholder that he is guilty concerning his brother; will you allow me to propound a few questions to you on this subject, and to request you to have the goodness to answer them categorically?

1. If the statutes of the Lord are right and his commandments pure, enlightening the eyes, has he not in these statutes and commandments furnished us with a rule to guide us in every possible situation in which we may be placed towards himself, and our fellow men?

2. Would the slaveholder violate any law of God, by breaking every yoke and letting the oppressed go free?

3. If slavery is not forbidden in the Bible, may it not continue in our midst, when transgression is finished, and an end made of sin, and everlasting righteousness be brought in?

4. If the letter and the spirit of the Bible are not against slavery, then the awful denunciations against oppressors cannot reach the slaveholder. (See Job xxvii.) On whom then, will these punishments fall?

5. There is something divinely tender in God's directions for the kind treatment of the stranger! "If a stran-

ger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him, but the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born amongst you, and thou shalt love him as yourself." Will not this law reach the human beings brought here in slave-ships? If not, where do you class them? are they the poor, the outcast, the needy, the naked, the hungry, the sick, the broken-hearted, the ignorant, the heathen, the sinners, the members of God's mystical body? does not God's mercy meet them in each of these characters, and enjoins upon his brother a duty to be performed? Is the slave without the pale of God's love?

6. What wrong did the sons of Jacob by selling Joseph into slavery? was it more sinful to sell one of Jacob's sons than any other of our heavenly Father's children?

7. What wrong did Pharaoh to the Israelites? if slavery is not forbidden, where are his accusers?

8. How will slavery stand the law, "Love thy neighbor as thyself?" and the golden rule, "Do as you would be done by?" Can it remain where these laws are applied?

I have many other questions to propose, but will not trouble you with them at this time. Should you condescend an answer to my queries, I shall consider it as a permission to address you again on this subject.

Liberty and Equality.

BY SAMUEL J. MAY.

But, say our opponents, your plan contemplates the elevation of negroes, to the rank of white men—you claim for them equal civil and social privileges. Surely we do. We would give them every opportunity, every facility, every assistance to rise to an equality with us, ay, to surpass us, if they can. For we do not presume, that even white men, though they are rich, and proud, and indolent, have attained the summit of human excellence; and we dare not bid the sable children of our heavenly Father to aspire after a resemblance to any lower one than that dearly beloved Son, with whom the Father declared himself well pleased.

And where is the folly, or the hazard, in what we say, and would do? We by no means insist, that ignorant men shall be regarded as wise, or vicious men accounted as upright and pure. But we do insist, that the ignorant of all complexions ought to be permitted and assisted to become wise—and the wicked to become good. And we insist that men, black, no less than white, should be acknowledged to be what they are, both positively and comparatively.

Our white brethren, we suspect, would not be so very sensitive on this point, as they are, if their title to the superiority they claim, was not doubtful. Were some visionary disciples of Lord Monboddo, (if he has any,) to propose a plan for the improvement of the race of monkies, and their elevation to the rights and privileges of men, who would think of seriously opposing the project? Who would not readily say to the dreamers, go on, if you will, and when you get your monkies to be men, we will acknowledge them.

Many there are, who affect to regard the negroes as a race of beings nearly akin to monkies. But when we see severe laws enacted, prohibiting the instruction of colored people throughout the slave-holding States; and heavy penalties inflicted upon those who dare to teach them;—and when, at the North, we see every impediment thrown in the way of their improvement, what does it prove? What? That their opposers know there are beneath their darker skins intellectual powers, and moral affections, which, if cherished and suffered to unfold, would command for these despised, oppressed, outraged ones all that respect and affection, which are due to those, who are made of the same blood, are the children of the same parent, and heirs of the same immortality.

We are fairly ashamed of our white brethren. They have had the advantage of the colored men for two centuries, if no more, and are afraid to give them an equal chance even now. This is mean. For ourselves, we can feel no self complacency in keeping in advance of our colored brethren, so long as they are *chained* behind us. We

would rather strike off their chains, lay aside every weight that encumbers them, remove every impediment from their path, lend them an helping hand, if they need it, raise them up when they fall, and in every way encourage them to run the race, which is set before them, as well as us, and to stretch forward that they may attain, if they can, nearer than ourselves to the mark of our high calling—the stature of perfect men.

Dr. Channing's New Work.

We rejoice to give the readers of the Offering a few detached passages from Dr. Channing's new work. It is the best that he has yet written on the subject of Slavery and Freedom; and we hope it will be widely circulated.

“It is important, that we should each of us bear our conscientious testimony against slavery, not only to swell that tide of public opinion, which is to sweep it away, but that we may save ourselves from sinking into silent, unsuspecting acquiescence in the evil. A constant resistance is needed to this downward tendency, as is proved by the tone of feeling in the free States. What is more common among ourselves, than a courteous, apologetic disapprobation of slavery, which differs little from taking its part. This is one of its worst influences. It taints the whole country. The existence, the perpetual presence of a great, prosperous, unrestrained system of wrong in a community, is one of the sorest trials to the moral sense of the people, and needs to be earnestly withstood. The idea of justice becomes unconsciously obscured in our minds. Our hearts become more or less seared to wrong. The South says, that slavery is nothing to us at the North. But through our trade, we are brought into constant contact with it; we grow familiar with it; still more, we thrive by it; and the next step is easy, to consent to the sacrifice of human beings, by whom we prosper. The dead know not their

want of life, and so a people, whose moral sentiments are palsied by the interweaving of all their interests with a system of oppression, become degraded without suspecting it. In consequence of this connection with slave countries, the Idea of Human Rights, that great idea of our age, and on which we profess to build our institutions, is darkened, weakened among us, so as to be to many little more than a sound. A country of licensed, legalized wrongs, is not the atmosphere in which the sentiment of reverence for these rights can exist in full power. In such a community, there may be a respect for the arbitrary rights, which law creates, and may destroy, and a respect for historical rights, which rest on usage. But the fundamental rights which inhere in man as man, and which lie at the foundation of a just, equitable, beneficent, noble polity, must be imperfectly comprehended. This depression of moral sentiment in a people, is an evil, the extent of which is not easily apprehended. It affects and degrades every relation of life. Men, in whose sight human nature is stripped of all its rights and dignity, cannot love or honor any who possess it, as they ought. In offering these remarks, I do not forget what I rejoice to know, that there is much moral feeling among us in regard to slavery. But still there is a strong tendency to indifference, and to something worse; and on this account we owe it to our own moral health, and to the moral life of society, to express plainly and strongly our moral abhorrence of this institution."

"There is one portion of the community, to which I would especially commend the cause of the enslaved, and the duty of open testimony against this form of oppression; and that is, our women."

"I know it will be said, that in thus doing, woman will wander beyond her sphere, and forsake her proper work. What! Do I hear such language in a civilized age, and in a land of Christians. What, let me ask, is woman's work? It is to be a minister of Christian love. It is to sympathize with human misery. It is to keep alive in society some feeling of human brotherhood. This is her mission on

earth. Woman's sphere, I am told, is home. And why is home instituted? Why are domestic relations ordained? These relations are for a day; they cease at the grave. And what is their great end? To nourish a love which will endure forever, to awaken universal sympathy. Our ties to our parents are to bind us to the Universal Parent. Our fraternal bonds to help us to see in all men our brethren. Home is to be a nursery of Christians; and what is the end of Christianity but to awaken in all souls the principles of universal justice and universal charity. At home we are to learn to love our neighbor, our enemy, the stranger, the poor, the oppressed. If home do not train us to this, then it is woefully perverted. If home counteract and quench the spirit of Christianity, than we must remember the Divine Teacher, who commands us to forsake father and mother, brother and sister, wife and child, for His sake, and for the sake of his truth. If the walls of home are the bulwarks of a narrow, clannish love, through which the cry of human miseries and wrongs cannot penetrate, then it is mockery to talk of their sacredness. Domestic life is at present too much in hostility to the spirit of Christ. A family should be a community of dear friends, strengthening one another for the service of their fellow creatures. Can we give the name of Christian to most of our families? Can we give it to women, who have no thoughts, or sympathies for multitudes of their own sex, distant only two or three days' journey from their doors, and exposed to outrages, from which they would pray to have their own daughters snatched, though it were by death?"

"Having spoken of the individual, I proceed to speak of the duties of the Free States, in their political capacity, in regard to slavery; and these may be reduced to two heads, both of them negative. The first is, to abstain as rigidly from the use of political power against slavery in the States where it is established, as from exercising it against slavery in foreign communities. The second is, to free ourselves from all obligation to use the powers of the national or

State governments in any manner whatever for the support of slavery.

The first duty is clear. In regard to slavery, the Southern States stand on the ground of foreign communities. They are not subject or responsible to us more than these. No state-sovereignty can intermeddle with the institutions of another. We might as legitimately spread our legislation over the schools, churches, or persons of the South, as over their slaves. And in regard to the general government, we know that it was not intended to confer any power, direct or indirect, on the free, over the slave States. Any pretension to such power on the part of the North, would have dissolved immediately the convention which framed the constitution. Any act of the free States, when assembled in Congress, for the abolition of slavery in other States, would be a violation of the national compact, and would be just cause of complaint.

On this account, I cannot but regret the disposition of a part of our abolitionists to organize themselves into a political party. Were it indeed their simple purpose to free the North from all obligation to give support to slavery, I should agree with them in their end, though not in their means. By looking, as they do, to political organization, as a means of putting down the institution in other States, they lay themselves open to reproach. I know, indeed, that excellent men are engaged in this movement, and I acquit them of all disposition to transcend the limits of the Federal Constitution. But it is to be feared, that they may construe this instrument too literally; that, forgetting its spirit, they may seek to use its powers for purposes very remote from its original design. Their failure is almost inevitable. By extending their agency beyond its true bounds, they ensure its defeat in its legitimate sphere. By assuming a political character, they lose the reputation of honest enthusiasts, and come to be considered as hypocritical seekers after place and power. Should they, in opposition to all probability, become a formidable party, they would unite the slaveholding States as one man; and the

South, always able, when so united, to link with itself a party at the North, would rule the country as before."

"I cannot but express again regret at the willingness of the abolitionists to rely on and pursue political power. Their strength has always lain in the simplicity of their religious trust, in their confidence in christian truth. Formerly, the hope sometimes crossed my mind, that, by enlarging their views and purifying their spirit, they would gradually become a religious community, founded on the recognition of God as the common, equal Father of all mankind, on the recognition of Jesus Christ as having lived and died to unite to himself and to baptize with his spirit every human soul, and on the recognition of the brotherhood of all the members of God's human family. There are signs that Christians are tending, however slowly, toward a church, in which these great ideas of Christianity will be realized; in which a spiritual reverence for God, and for the human soul, will take place of the customary homage paid to outward distinctions; and in which our present narrow sects will be swallowed up. I thought, that I saw in the principles with which the abolitionists started, a struggling of the human mind toward this christian union. It is truly a disappointment to see so many of their number becoming a political party, an association almost always corrupting, and most justly suspected on account of the sacrifices of truth, and honor, and moral independence, which it extorts even from well-disposed men. Their proper work is to act on all parties, to support each as far as it shall be true to human rights, to gather laborers for the good cause from all bodies, civil and religious, and to hold forth this cause as a universal interest, and not as the property or stepping stone of a narrow association.

I know that it is said, that nothing but this political action can put down slavery. Then slavery must continue; and if we faithfully do our part as Christians, we are not responsible for its continuance. We are not to feel, as if we were bound to put it down by any and every means. Let us then work against all wrong, but with a calm, sol-

emn earnestness, not with vehemence and tumult. Let us work with deep reverence and filial trust toward God, and not in the proud impetuosity of our own wills. Happy the day, when such laborers shall be gathered by an inward attraction into one church or brotherhood, whose badge, creed, spirit, shall be Universal Love."

A Fact.

A lady who had been informed that the children of slaves receive religious instruction, was undeceived by the answer of a little bright-eyed slave girl to a single question.

"My dear, can you tell me what you were made for?"

"Yes, missey;—made to sell."

No oral instruction that the child had ever received, (though it might have enjoyed the privilege of family prayer at the great house, catechetical instruction, and three sermons a week,) could countervail this terrible instruction of *facts*.

M. W. C.

Testimony of a Dying Witness.

It is a gentle eve, the pale pure moon,
Looks o'er the sweep of waters, as they lie
Stretched out, beneath her meek and lovely eye.
It is a grateful hour, even to the sick;
The balmy flowers that wreathe yon window low,
Are not more sweet, than to the languid soul
This grateful stillness, this refreshing calm.

Turn thy faint head, my brother! said a maid,
Kneeling beside the couch of wasting pain;
Oh! turn and see how full of heaven is earth,
In this most blessed night—such, oh beloved!
Such be the hour when thou art called away,
To the far mansion of thy heavenly rest.--

"Sister," the sick man answered, "now the while
I lie at ease, and feel the influence bland
Of this heart-soothing hour, I will relate
The history of my wanderings and return,
As thou hast tenderly of me required.
Thou knowest beloved sister, I was born
Where freedom visits all, but those like me
Tinctured with Ethiop blood.—Early I felt
The burning of the brand, though counted free.
I felt the withering of eternal scorn
Repress the gladness of my childish hours;
And harrow up my warm aspiring youth;
Oh! who can think of Nature's sufferings,
Till Jesus, till my blessed Savior came,
His heart o'erflowing with his healing love,
His arms extended, and his bosom warm,
To clasp the closer his despised one.

Could I unmindful of such mercy prove!
Ah! sister hear the truth! I fain must tell
How christian pride, and my revolting heart,
But for Eternal Grace, had wrecked my soul.

I went to a fair city; everywhere,
The temple of the impartial God arose.
I entered in, the pale-faced worshippers
Had equal seats—but there was *none* for me.—
I like a culprit, guilty of some crime,
Too vile to mingle with his fellow men,
Must be *permitted* in some lonely nook,
Oh, foulest shame! oh ever during blot!
Eternity shall tremble yet, to hear,
How pride usurps the very seat of God.

Even the love with which my new born soul
Had sought her christian kindred, thus repulsed,
Quickened the bitterness. I turned away
A "little one, offended,"—darkness came,

And gloomy doubt, athwart my tempted soul.
My mind confused, could separate no more
The unrighteous practice from the holy faith—
I heard the name of Jesus but from those,
Whose heart despised me, claiming to be his.
That once so precious name, associate now
With what most stung me, was no longer dear.
Once to a fallen church Jehovah said,
“It is through you the Eternal blessed name
Is every day blasphemed.” Alas! my heart,
Though it blasphemed not—seemed to love no more.

At length one Sabbath day, while in this mood
I roamed at will, and heard from every side
God praised in all the churches, I beheld
The temple also of those blinded men
Who see no God, in this *God breathing* world.
I entered in. *Here* to be thrust away
In some lone corner, had not wounded me.
Men free to act themselves, without restraint
Of God or conscience, should be prone to pride.
But lo, here was equality; no man
Came with a look severe to show my place.
I felt myself at once an equal man;
I cannot tell, how dangerously fast
This overcame my soul; soon, soon I grew
As lost as these in deadly unbelief.
Too soon, too soon, I found, that I had lost
My precious peace of mind, my Comforter.
The sweet, clear shining of redeeming love,
Before obscured, seemed now *entirely gone*.
No evidence had I, but the deep pain
With which I sought in vain an absent God,
Still came with deeper gloom—till as it were
Hell closed around me.—Hapless one! thought I,
Driven from thy Father's house, why didst thou go
To engulf thy spirit in that fiery state,
Of everlasting blackness and despair?

I left the infidels : the inward storm
 Raged till it spent itself—then died away
 In sullen calmness, till I thought my soul
 Had seen her last of the white wings of hope
 Soaring away from me, far out of sight.
 But while I sat in darkness of the grave,
 With heart all desolation, having past
 My last, last struggle with my threatened fate,
 Lo, suddenly there broke a ray of light
 Upon my soul ; from Calvary it came.
 God of my spirit, what an hour was that,
 When on my knees, my thirsty soul imbibed,
 That first sweet draught of thy returning love.
 Jesus, thou knowest, how I wept away,
 In one short moment, all the pain of years.
 In flowed the sweetness, in a deeper gush,
 Till all my soul, and all my heart was full
 Of the abundant joy. So God forgave,
 And at his feet I there forgave the men,
 Whose pride had blighted all my early love.
 But sister, with my love to God, there came
 Pure jealous indignation, when I saw
 The holy name so outraged and betrayed,
 Brought to sustain and sanction foulest crime,
 By those who call themselves the sons of God.
 But now I die in peace, for lo I see
 The hastening morning of a better day.
 I hear the battlements of many towers
 Come groaning to the ground. I see the thrones
 Are all cast down—the highest stars of pride
 Fall from the skies—the heavens grow dark and void,
 The former things all pass away, and lo
 A Heaven and Earth, where God may ever dwell.
 Farewell, sweet sister, I have told thee all ;
 Go wipe thy weeping eyes and pray for me,
 Then sink to sleep, for all within is well
 With thy loved brother, if he wakes no more."

S.